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Operations Center**Cable Highlights**Wednesday, April 10, 2002
0530 EDT**COLOMBIA: FARC BOMBS MORE SOPHISTICATED, DEADLIER**

(SBU) New techniques used by the FARC in the wave of bombings which began April 6 have resulted in greater casualties and show the rebels are targeting the GOC's small corps of professional bomb technicians. FARC bombs, formerly quite simple, now typically have several hidden detonators, traps to kill technicians, or are remotely detonated when a high number of potential victims are near. The April 9 bombing in downtown Bogota, in which the bomb was detonated after two bomb technicians approached, brought the total of technicians killed to 12, out of only 110 nationwide. The GOC believes Provisional Irish Republican Army members who entered the former safehaven in 1998 provided the FARC with its new expertise. For its part, the GOC lacks bomb robots, anti-bomb suits, and modern training to respond to the wave of bombings, aimed at showing the government's impotence prior to May Presidential elections. (Bogota 3216)

VENEZUELA: WORK STOPPAGE EFFECTIVE

(U) Around 80 percent of Caracas businesses, all banks, all shopping malls, and most schools were closed April 9. However, pro-government supporters at certain key locations in the city were well-organized and vocal while an opposition presence was non-existent. Opposition lawmakers also boycotted the National Assembly session, but pro-government delegates still achieved a working quorum. The opposition will find it difficult to sustain support without more visible success. Labor and business leaders decided to extend the work stoppage through the morning of April 11. (Caracas 948)

TURKEY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TO OPEN BRANCHES

(C) Following months of negotiations between Amnesty International (AI) and Turkish lawmakers and lobbying of State Minister of Human Rights by the diplomatic community, the GOT officially consented to the opening of AI's Turkey branch. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] On April 8, President Sezer signed into a law a package of EU-related reforms which deleted prohibitions on NGOs in Turkey working with international counterparts, freeing the way for AI to begin operations in Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, and Diyarbakir. (Ankara 2838)

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